

early winter. This summer three Murres were observed early in July. One was captured alive by Chas. M. Clarke on July 8, but died in a few days, and the others were found dead by Mr. Edwin Beaupre, Jr., and a friend, about a week after this date. All three birds died of starvation, without doubt.

The Knot (*Tringa canutus*), reported as very rare in Ontario, visits Kingston from time to time, and on June 2, 1897, Mr. Edwin Beaupre and I saw several on Amherst Island, one of which was secured. The one shot by Mr. Beaupre was with a large flock of Golden Plovers.

McIlwraith in his excellent work, 'Birds of Ontario,' reports the Bartramian Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*) as seldom seen in Ontario. This bird has of late years taken possession of Simcoe Island, Wolfe Island, Amherst Island and many of the fields between Lansdowne and Napanee, a distance of fifty miles, and is found breeding freely. It is not disturbed by the farmers and appears to be steadily increasing in numbers.

The Black Tern (*Hydrochelidon nigra surinamensis*), not reported in the east of Ontario, breeds at Kingston and Lansdowne. The Rev. C. J. Young has taken eggs at Lansdowne, and this year I found several pairs breeding in Cataraqui Marsh. Have observed the bird regularly for many years.

The White-rumped Shrike reported as rare by McIlwraith in the east of Ontario, is abundant about Kingston, probably owing to the fact that several varieties of thorns are common here.—C. K. CLARKE, M.D., *Kingston, Ontario, Can.*

Rare Birds taken in Toronto and Vicinity.—*Ammodramus leconteii*. LECONTE'S SPARROW. — A male specimen was given to me as an Acadian Sharp-tailed Sparrow, taken May 5, 1897, in Toronto. This is the first one known to have been taken in Ontario.

Colymbus holboellii. HOLBELL'S GREBE. — Six specimens have been taken in Toronto between April 26 and May 1, three of which are now in my collection.

Lagopus lagopus. WILLOW PTARMIGAN.—While visiting a taxidermist shop in Toronto my attention was drawn to this specimen, which was taken in Whitby, thirty miles east of Toronto on May 15, 1897. Having a friend there I wrote to him, and he got for me the particulars about the bird, which is now in my collection. It is in its winter plumage, with the exception of a few brown feathers which are appearing about the head and neck. The tail-feathers have a slight brown tinge. Sex not given.

Ardetta neoxena. CORY'S LEAST BITTERN. — A male was taken in Toronto May 14 by G. Pearce. The plumage shows traces of albinistic markings, as follows: one white feather on the abdomen near the vent, and four white feathers on the inside of each tibia. It is now in my collection.

The female was taken in the same locality by the same person on June 30, 1897,—a very fine specimen with plumage normal and no traces of albinism.

Ægialitis nivosa. SNOWY PLOVER.—On July 6 there was brought to me for my inspection a Snowy Plover in the flesh. So far as is known this is the third record for Toronto.—J. H. AMES, *Toronto, Canada*.

Disgorgement among Song-birds.—In response to the suggestion appended to Mr. Joseph Grinnell's interesting note in regard to 'Disgorgement among Song Birds,' which appeared in the last number of 'The Auk,' I am moved to jot the following.

While observing the nesting habits of Wood Thrushes—more than a score of years ago—my curiosity was first aroused as to how those birds managed to so perfectly clean—polish, I might say—the quantity of cherry stones I used to find in their nests. After a time I noticed that the parent birds fed to their young broods the cherries whole, as they were brought from the trees, scattered sparsely in the adjacent woods. These cherries, I may say, were noticeably smaller than such as are of average market size, being such as are termed by botanists 'escapes,' and it was not uncommon to find a fair handful of the stones in each nest in a proportion of those examined.

But two or three years later, when the chance occurred of watching the process of rearing by hand a couple of broods of Wood Thrushes, I observed that when the half-fledged young ones were fed with small cherries, unbroken, that afterwards at short intervals—as the pulp was digested—they raised the cherry stones in their throats and expelled them, perfectly clean, from their bills. Occasionally only a single stone was thus ejected, but, more generally, two or three at a time would follow each other rapidly. And in this way it happened that I first understood how it came about that the cherry stones found in Wood Thrushes' nests were polished.

Since then, however, I have had many opportunities of observing that the habit of disgorging the stones of small fruits and the large seeds of some berries, such as those of the dogwood and Virginia creeper, is common to various species of birds; and besides those named, in this respect, by Mr. Grinnell, I have witnessed it in all our true Thrushes except (for lack of opportunity) Bicknell's Thrush. Among Warblers, etc., I have noticed that this habit is possessed by the Red-eyed Vireo, Myrtle Bird, European Robin and larger Pettichaps—this latter observed only in captivity.

But as far as my observations extend, I am inclined to think that such birds as are both insectivorous and frugivorous and whose practice is also, wholly or mainly, to peck their food to little bits before swallowing it, as is the case with the Brown Thrushes and Catbird, for examples, do not possess this habit of disgorgement.—THOMAS PROCTOR, *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Disgorgement of Cherry Stones again Noted.—Mr. Joseph Grinnell's notes on the 'Disgorgement of Song-birds,' Auk, Vol. XIV, 1897, page 318, have prompted me to describe a similar experience I had this summer while photographing a nest near Philadelphia, Pa. After tying my